

# STAR



## STudent Achievement in Reading

### State Application

#### **What is the *STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR)* Pilot Program?**

**STAR** is a reading improvement initiative that will support approximately six pilot states committed to improving reading instruction for intermediate-level adults. DTI Associates, Inc. through a contract with the United States Department of Education operates Project **STAR**, a National Leadership activity under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. **STAR** translates the research-based principles identified in The Partnership for Reading publication, *Research-based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction*, into useable classroom strategies, and assembles current reading resources in the **STAR Toolkit**, including information about assessment, curriculum, and instruction.

States will work with national technical assistance experts to: 1) assemble a state project team that includes state staff and professional developers, 2) develop a state-specific plan for reading improvement, and 3) select local pilot sites to field test training and materials in the first phase of this project.

#### **What are the Benefits of Participating?**

Participation in the **STAR** pilot provides the opportunity for selected states to experience a number of benefits. The project will select up to six states committed to systemic program improvement, and includes:

- Access to an expert national technical assistance team, available to guide states through all aspects of the pilot;
- Access to training materials and the **STAR Toolkit** with resources for improving intermediate-level adult reading instruction;
- Assistance in developing a cadre of instructional leaders at the state and local levels who will assist in improving reading instruction statewide;
- Use of data-based decision-making models that will provide a foundation for continuous improvements in instructional quality; and
- Involvement in an innovative project that applies research-based reading principles to classroom instruction.

### **What are the Key Features of the Pilot?**

- National support for up to six states selected to participate in the *STAR* Consortium;
- State teams comprised of state staff, professional developers, and local programs working to implement a state-specific plan to improve reading instruction;
- A site-based approach to program improvement that engages local program directors and classroom instructors in improving reading instruction;
- Identification of barriers to program improvement at the state and local levels and assistance in developing strategies to overcome them;
- A field test of the *STAR Toolkit* designed to address instructional strategies, reading assessment, and curriculum; and
- An evaluation of the *STAR* pilot and its effectiveness in changing reading instruction in the classroom.

### **How Does a State Apply to Participate in the *STAR* Consortium?**

To participate in this opportunity to be among national leaders in improving adult reading education practice, states are invited to submit a letter of intent and application describing their qualifications for conducting the pilot program successfully. Criteria for selection will include, but are not limited to:

- Strong state-level leadership in implementing adult education programs;
- A commitment to affect continuous improvement in current reading practices;
- The ability to deploy resources for professional development;
- The ability to align state policies to support the improvement processes;
- The capability to influence day-to-day instructional practices at the classroom level; and
- A willingness to use research-based reading principles to inform classroom practices.

To express interest in participating in the *STAR* pilot, states should submit the attached application and a letter of intent describing their plans for implementation if selected by **4 p.m. EST, Friday, May 14, 2004**. Applications should be sent to: DTI Associates, Inc., Attn: Ruth Martinez, 400 VA. Ave. SW, Room 150, Washington, DC 20024. For further information, contact Ruth Martinez at [ruth.martinez@ed.gov](mailto:ruth.martinez@ed.gov) or (202) 205-5554.

**STATE APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION  
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING PILOT PROJECT**

**Applicant Information**

1. Legal Name of Applicant Agency (State Eligible Agency) under WIA Title II:	2. Employer Identification Number (EIN):  ____ - _____
3. Applicant Address (include zip):	4. Contact Person  Name:  Position:  Telephone:  Fax:
5. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this application are true and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant and the applicant will comply with the attached assurances if the assistance is awarded.	
a. Typed Name and Title of Authorized Representative:	b. Tel. No.
c. Signature of Authorized Representative:	d. Date

**State System Summary Data**

Total Number of Adult Learners Served Statewide	
Dedicated State and Federal Funding for Adult Education	\$
Dedicated State and Federal Funding for Adult Education Professional Development	\$
Number of NRS Low and High Intermediate ABE Learners Enrolled in 2002-03 (NRS Table 1)	
Educational Gains for Low and High Intermediate ABE Learners Enrolled in 2002-03 (NRS Table 4A)	

## **Selection Factors**

Please provide responses for each of the selection factors listed below. Responses should include specific examples of state-level capabilities currently in place and commitments the state would make to improve its capabilities through the pilot. Because the pilot program will involve state-level dissemination of research-based principles for adult education reading instruction, responses should focus on these areas wherever possible. Applicants should limit their submission to no more than six pages overall. **STAR** project staff may follow-up with applicants by phone if further information is required.

- 1. Leadership.** As part of the **STAR** pilot, state offices will be required to assemble and lead a state project team comprised of a variety of individuals who can affect change, influence policy and people, and deploy resources. Given the goals of the project, this team might consist of a state policy person, a data specialist, a professional development specialist, a local program director, and an ABE instructor. Please describe the role the state office will take in implementing the pilot.
  - How will the state office assemble the state project team, and whom will your team consist of? What qualifications do these individuals possess? Will the team have the support necessary to make policy decisions and deploy resources related to the implementation of this project?
  - What circumstances currently exist in the state that will support the successful implementation of the STAR project (e.g., funding, reading initiatives, policies)?
  - What capacity does the state have for disaggregating NRS data by local program, and how will the state office work with local programs to collect data the pilot will require?
  - Has the State Adult Education Office attempted other program improvement efforts in the past? How successful were they? Briefly describe past efforts.
- 2. Professional Development.** Throughout this project, professional development will be the vehicle for assisting local pilot sites with improving reading instruction. Please describe your ability to deploy professional development to support local pilot implementation.
  - What specific types of state or regional professional development initiatives are currently underway or planned to begin this year – especially in the area of reading instruction?
  - How would participation in a pilot focusing on *professional development* in adult reading instruction fit with the state’s major adult education priorities?
  - Describe the state and local commitment to the additional time and resources that would be required to participate in the pilot (e.g., intensive training).
- 3. Reading Instruction.** Please describe your state’s interest in improving reading instruction. Include past and current reading initiatives and professional development activities, along with your state’s level of commitment to future innovations.
  - What types of adult education reading initiatives (e.g., training, programs, reading standards, assessment, etc.) are currently in progress statewide?
  - What kinds of reading instruction are currently being used (e.g., curriculum, text books, specific reading programs, etc.)?
  - What tests of reading ability are being used for student placement and determining progress? (This list does not need to be limited to NRS reporting instruments.)

#### **4. Overall Readiness and Commitment**

- Based on the information you provided, on a scale of 1-4 (1= least ready and 4= most ready), how would you rate the readiness and commitment of your state for engaging in the STAR project?